

ABSTRACT

TITLE: State Housing Plan

SUBJECT: Statewide housing planning

DATE: March 2000

AGENCY &
SOURCE

OF COPIES: Statewide Planning Program
Rhode Island Department of Administration
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5872
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SERIES

NUMBER: Report Number 98, State Guide Plan Element 421

NUMBER

OF PAGES: 101

ABSTRACT: State Guide Plan Element 98, the *State Housing Plan*, was approved by the State Planning Council on March 9, 2000.

This element supercedes and replaces State Guide Plan Element 421, the *State Housing Plan* and State Guide Plan Element 422, the *Areawide Housing Plan*.

The State Housing Plan consists of five parts:

- 1) goals and policies for housing in Rhode Island,
- 2) housing planning and development issues,
- 3) housing problems,
- 4) inventory of housing resources, and
- 5) implementation proposals.

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PREFACE

This plan is intended to serve as a policy and management tool to aid the public and private sectors in achieving the broadest of all possible housing goals: to provide affordable housing, in standard condition, and in a suitable living environment, for all Rhode Island residents; with special emphasis on housing needs of lower-income households and individuals.

There is a general consensus that the present decade has been more pragmatic and more fiscally conservative than the two decades preceding it. This has meant diminished funding and elimination of many housing programs. An improved “infrastructure” of services to support and encourage self-sufficiency and independence is now being emphasized. Many of the proposals in this plan have been considered with this current emphasis in mind.

Relations to previous plans

The first State Housing Plan was adopted in 1979 by the State Planning Council as State Guide Plan Element 421. The purpose of the plan was to meet federal requirements for a state housing element that would establish general goals and policies for housing based on an analysis of major housing problems and would recommend actions to address them.

A second plan, the Areawide Housing Plan, Element 422, was adopted in July 1984 to update sections of the State Housing Plan and to introduce a new “fair share” concept for the allocation of assisted housing in Rhode Island communities.

While a number of policy areas from both prior plans remain unchanged, there are new conditions in housing planning that warrant different approaches as suggested in the current plan. Major concerns, as expressed in the original plan, are still valid. They have only been altered where there was a need to focus on concerns expressed by communities in their comprehensive plan housing elements.

The emphasis on using tables and other supportive information within the plan has been slightly modified. References are made to the *Housing Data Base* published by Statewide Planning, and the *R.I. Consolidated Plan*, published by the R.I. Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (Rhode Island Housing or RIH). Such data will add to the text, or support it, especially concerning policy and implementation.

The Areawide Housing Plan promoted the reduction of housing need by encouraging communities to strive toward attaining a “fair share” of low-income housing units. This was worked out through a complex formula. The value of using this particular formula has diminished substantially since the 1984 plan was published, and therefore it has not been used in the new plan.

One reason is that there is a sophisticated “needs” rating system (with some similarities to the former “fair share” plan) used to evaluate housing proposals presented for funding under the Community Development Block Grant Program. This “Action Plan” assigns points to each

community for various housing-related factors. Also, Rhode Island Housing periodically updates and publishes a table showing subsidized low/moderate income housing in each community as an overall percentage of total units. This table is used primarily as a guide for *section 45-53-6* of the *R.I. Low and Moderate Income Housing Act*, which calls for communities to strive to meet a minimum 10 percent of low/moderate income housing. These figures are considered to be an important part of each Consolidated Plan update.

This plan, Element 421, is the updated housing element of the State Guide Plan. Like the previous Element 421 and Element 422 which it replaces, it will require periodic review and updating.

Acknowledgments

This plan was prepared by Albert A. Pointe, Principal Housing Specialist, under the supervision of Alvin N. Johnson, Assistant Chief of Strategic Planning, and the editorial guidance of Susan P. Morrison, former Chief of Statewide Planning, (retired: 1998) and John O'Brien, Chief of Statewide Planning. Mark G. Brown, Senior Housing Specialist, provided information from his previously published report *Housing Data Base* (February 1996), and additionally, he, Walter A. Slocomb, Principal Planner, and Kevin Nelson, Principal Planner, contributed time in preparing some of the tables. Linda O. Resendes, Senior Word Processing Typist, and Kim A. Gelfuso, Information Service Technician I, were responsible for the final word processing and for composing the remaining tables. Graphics were provided by Mansuet J. Giusti, III, Supervising Draftsperson.

Special thanks are given to Elizabeth A. Dever, a Brown University student intern, who did extensive work in gathering and evaluating information from local comprehensive plans, which was useful in guiding the direction of portions of this plan.

Preparation of this plan was performed under Task 2302 of the Statewide Planning Program Work Program for Fiscal Years 1995 through 1999. Support was provided by state appropriations.

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